

Suffrage For Teenagers?

President Dwight Eisenhower and North Carolina Democrat Thad Eure have joined the State of Georgia in believing folks 18 years of age should have the right to vote. They are joining the ranks of those who argue that a person old enough to fight is old enough to vote. In North Carolina there is little agitation for suffrage for teenagers, but on the National level, whether for political gain or not, there is a growing demand that the right to vote be extended to cover 18-year-olds.

We can't go along with this movement. We think the age of 21 is low a-plenty.

In the first place, there is a fallacy in the argument that men old enough to fight should be old enough to vote. The fighting man in the front needs courage, a certain degree of foolhardiness, and the ability to decide the best course of action required by the immediate situation. In voting, a citizen needs to know his responsibility, a sense of caution, and the ability to decide the best course of action dictated by conditions which will arise in the future.

Back in 1944 when the late President Franklin Roosevelt was elected for his last term, the editor was doing his bit for democracy in Italy as a fighting 20-year-old. Every person in the armed forces below the age of 21 had to sign a statement to the effect that they had been given an opportunity to vote if eligible. We remarked then that we certainly did not feel slighted over not being permitted to vote. Our opinion remains that 20 years is too young.

But maybe the proposers are correct—18 years-old folks should be allowed to vote. Then the question arises: Why not 16-year-olds? How come, if the three-year difference between 18 and 21 is not too much, the two-year spread between 16 and 18 would be less.

Best we leave the minimum voting age where it is.

Value of a Newspaper

Sometimes merchants, whose advertisements give financial support, harbor the idea that a newspaper is an expensive nuisance, costing more than it can ever be worth. But you find a different view expressed by merchants in communities which have no newspaper. This we found when we talked to a progressive merchant from a neighboring town this week.

"How can we advertise our town?" he asked. "What should we do?"

It is a hard question to answer. No one in the town has any desire to attempt a newspaper—a task which contains plenty of toil and headaches and discouragingly little financial reward. A printer in a neighboring town had discussed a newspaper with our friend, but gave up the idea when one of his newspapers folded for lack of support. Everybody seems to want a newspaper, but nobody will start one.

We're not patting The Zebulon Record on the back. We're just pointing out to our merchants that the means of publicizing their businesses is ready and waiting. Zebulon merchants don't have to worry about starting a newspaper. It's here.

60 Second Sermon

By Fred Dodge

TEXT: "In taking revenge man is but even with his enemy; in passing it over, he is superior." — Francis Bacon

Little Johnnie had been so naughty that his mother had given him a good spanking. All that afternoon a desire for revenge burned in his little breast.

Finally bedtime came and he knelt to say his evening prayer. Johnny asked a blessing on each member of his family, excepting one. Then he climbed into bed, turned, looked at his mother triumphantly and said,

"I s'pose you noticed you wasn't in it!"

"Getting even" is a childish practice. Consider all the time and energy that is spent in planning how to "get even." Add to that the unhappiness innocent friends suffer while someone is concentrating on "getting even." Is a brief moment of lonely triumph worth it? One who spends his or her time in "getting even" might as well carry a sign reading "I am a child." Only a child fails to see that no one cares whether he is "even" or not. "Getting even" is a lonely task. "Forgiveness" is the password for joining a really happy throng.

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Potter Patter

By Eloise Potter

Thursday morning (Jan. 14), just like every other time *The News and Observer* editorial writer is desperate for something to gripe about, said publication carried a little piece implying that a ridiculously large number of armories are being constructed in North Carolina and, presumably, in other states as well. There was a time, long before I saw the light through personal observation of Battery A, when I might have agreed with the poor misguided fellow; but no more.

In the first place, the writer's logic isn't all sound. He cites the fact that fifteen new armories have been authorized in North Carolina since 1952. Then he assumes that the other 47 states have received the same number of similar buildings. Finally he computes their cost at nearly ¾ million dollars. He never bothers to mention that this state was able to obtain 15 authorizations *only* because some other states refused to match government funds—apparently because they have enough armories to serve their units.

Worst of all the writer entirely

overlooks the value of the National Guard to individual towns, the state, and the country as a whole. The Guard is the least expensive way of training and maintaining large numbers of ready men for the defense of their country on short notice. Much expensive equipment is needed to properly carry out the program for each unit. It would be stupid to pay men for attending drills without giving them materials with which to earn their pay. It would be equally half-witted to furnish the materials and then allow them to be ruined while stored in inadequate buildings. Each unit needs an armory just like every merchant needs a store. And just like the merchant, the guard needs adequate facilities for efficient operation and expansion.

Aside from being ready for active duty with the armed services in case of an emergency, the guardsmen are prepared to aid the local community and state. I suppose everyone knows that the governor can call out the Guard in case of floods, tornadoes, forest fires, and other disasters which threaten lives and property in this state. Only recently I learned that

a special signal of the fire siren will bring the local guardsmen together if they should be needed to meet an emergency right here in Zebulon. Isn't it reassuring to know that close at hand is a large group of able-bodied, well-disciplined men who are trained in first aid and other emergency measures?

Of course most of you who read this column already know as I do that Battery A is a fine group of men and that the money invested in an armory for them is money well spent. Also like me, most of you are probably looking forward to seeing all the people of the community using the armory building for constructive and peaceful activities.

But our sophisticated big city editorial writer undoubtedly never takes time to read the *Record*; so he'll continue to rant and rave about armory expenditures. Until someone with more authority and influence than I possess takes the trouble to set him straight, we'll read what he says, wink at one another, and with tongue in cheek wonder how much of the other stuff he says would make sense if we knew the straight of it.

Seen and Heard

Sometimes traveling over the world gives a person a better understanding of other peoples. Sometimes it doesn't. Being one of those favored by Uncle Sam with an expense-paid tour of Africa and Europe ten years ago, I haven't yet decided whether my experiences help or hinder my attempts toward international understanding.

I learned that in many ways people are the same the world over. I know plenty of merchants who don't hesitate at glossing over imperfections in their wares when a sale is to be made. Neither were the French in Oran above selling slightly imperfect wine to some of our brave soldiers, with resulting upset innards for the GI's.

I've often wondered just how much trouble the Arabs could create if they really went about it. They're bound to have a mess of guns and munitions sacked away someplace, what with right many well-armed Americans, French, Germans, Italians, and Englishmen fighting across their countryside.

Once a half dozen of us intrepid armen decided to hike across the African countryside to get a close view of the natives. We happened on a small group who seemed friendly enough, so pulling out our government issue phonetic

Arabic dictionary, we attempted a conversation. "See-had beel chi-or," we blurted, reading from the dictionary the words that should have said "hello."

"Bon jour," the Arabs replied, and so we found our high school French worked better.

The Arab group was dressed in filthy rags. The men's faces would have been rather handsome except for decayed teeth. We compared their looks with our own, and we showed up as nattily attired Americans.

One of the more stupid looking Arabs indicated he wanted to look at the automatic pistols we had strapped to our sides. After unloading it, Benu Atkood gave his trusty .45 to the Arab, who proceeded to completely fieldstrip the weapon in his hands without dropping a piece. Casually he reassembled the pistol and handed it back without comment. We took one look at his cold eyes and sauntered across the countryside as casually as shaking knees would permit.

Another time we were out bartering cigarettes for eggs (stork eggs, we later discovered). An Arab with a slight knowledge of English and an excellent knowledge of French inquired which of us were not married. Then he attempted to sell the bachelors in

the group his sister for the paltry sum of \$350.00. She was a wonderful buy, he said, for she was "brand new—never been used."

I wrote home of the episode and received an airmail letter. "Why didn't you buy her and ship her home?" the home folks demanded. "Help here is almost impossible to find and costs more than your Arab would."

The stork eggs were delicious, by the way. They were larger than hen eggs and tasted about the same, but we always felt cannibalistic when we ate them.

Our business dealings with the Arabs came to an unhappy end, however. One night after we had rejoiced over trading cigarettes for six dozen eggs, the citizens of the Tunisian desert silently invaded our tent area, slit the ends of three tents, and appropriated everything within reach, leaving with the loot without waking a soul.

We retaliated by buzzing our planes low over the Arab sheep herds, and driving the sheep through the villages and into the Arab huts. We laughed like everything over the mess the sheep must have made of the insides of the Arab huts, only to discover later that the Arabs and sheep all live together anyhow and so the sheep were only going home.

Democracy Gone to Seed

The word that I would pass on here had its birth in a country church a few weeks ago. It came about in this way: when I walked into the front door of the church, a plain, godly countryman was leading in prayer. Of course I stopped, hat in my hand, stood quietly and reverently and tried to join in the beautiful prayer the man was making. The feeling of humble reverence in the man's soul transmitted itself to the atmosphere about him as far as his voice could be heard. My feeling was, and is now, that that man's spirit was a rebuke to those who would approach our Maker in the spirit of slapping Him on the shoulder. In saying this I am reminded of several things in the

Holy Word: (1) When our Lord was responding to a request from His immediate followers for instructions in the sacred art of praying, His first word after the address, "Our Father," was "Hallowed by thy name;" (2) When God spoke to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3), his first word was "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet." In this connection it may be well to remind my readers that the Bible is an Eastern book. In the West we remove our hats when we go into our places of worship. In the East they remove their shoes to show reverence. Mrs. Browning has this in mind when she says that every bush is aflame with the Divine presence, but only those who take off their

shoes see it. (3) In our Lord's parable of the Pharisees and the Publican (Luke 18), the one that went to his house with the approval of God resting on him, was the one who would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but kept smiting (imperfect tense) on his breast saying, "God be merciful to me the sinner."

Much more of the same sort might be gathered from the Word, but this is enough. I believe in Democracy with all my soul, but real Democracy places the Holy God as the center of all life, keeps Him there, and adjusts every detail of life to this elementary and fundamental fact.

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